

## News Release

For immediate release

August 24, 2015

### **HCA selects contractor for coordinated foster youth health care services**

*Coordinated Care of Washington will manage services for more than 25,000 children and youth participating in the adoption support, foster care, and young adult foster care alumni programs.*

OLYMPIA – A 3-year-old girl entered foster care due to substantiated allegations of abuse and neglect. She appeared healthy, but there was evidence of methamphetamine use in the home from which she was removed, and there was no food in the home. Her parents report she had not seen a doctor in two years.

This real case helps illustrate the complex care needs for many children and youth in foster care. The Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) announced today that Coordinated Care of Washington (CCW) is the apparent successful bidder selected to provide health care to more than 25,000 foster children and youth who receive foster care and adoption support services. The program is also available to young adults who have aged out of the foster care system.

HCA is moving to a single managed care organization (MCO) to better manage the physical and mental health care for foster and adoption support youth enrolled in Apple Health (Medicaid). The move is expected to provide a system of consistent and coordinated health care services. Health care for children and youth in the foster care and adoption support programs is currently offered in a fee-for-service arrangement, which can lead to lack of coordination among a child's health care providers.

CCW will offer a comprehensive and coordinated medical benefit, including primary care; ancillary services such as tests, imaging and urgent care; pharmacy; and an outpatient mental health benefit. CCW also will ensure continuity of care if a child has a change in foster care placement.

"A single care plan will help ensure youth in foster care get access to the physical and mental health care they need," said HCA State Medicaid Director MaryAnne Lindeblad. "This is a complex and vulnerable population of kids and young adults who may have experienced trauma and toxic stress in their young lives. We want to be sure we are offering comprehensive, high-quality care and smooth transitions among multiple health care providers so that treatment, medication and equipment are well-coordinated."

"It is really important that these kids have the best health care available," said Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration Assistant Secretary Jennifer Strus. "We are glad this new system will help coordinate the services they are receiving."

The move aligns with legislative direction over the past several sessions, including House Bill 1879, sponsored by Rep. Ruth Kagi, D-Seattle, which passed during the 2015 legislative session.

Several categories of youth in foster care are eligible for Apple Health in Washington, including those who are:

- Under the age of 19 and in foster care.
- Children and youth receiving adoption support.
- Under age 21 and participating in the Extended Foster Care program.
- Between 19 and 26 years old and either were in foster care and enrolled in Apple Health on their 18th birthday or were older than 18 when their foster care assistance ended.

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### **About Washington State Health Care Authority**

HCA is the state's top health care purchaser, covering more than 2 million Washington residents through Apple Health (Medicaid) and the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) Program. We work with partners to help ensure Washingtonians have access to better health and better care at a lower cost. For more information, visit [www.hca.wa.gov](http://www.hca.wa.gov).

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